

A
SERMON
OF
REPENTANCE.

A very godly and profitable
Sermon Preached at
Lee in Essex.

ARTHUR DENT, Minister of Gods Word:
Published at the request of sundry godly,
and well disposed persons.

IONAH 2:8.

*They that waite upon lying vanities, forsake their
owne mercies.*

LONDON,
Printed by T. C. for Michael Sparks, dwelling
at the Signe of the Blue-Bible in Greene Arbor.
and are to be sold by R. Roysome in Luc-Lane. 1630.

In Concionem Arthuri Dent,
G. Padel Carmen.

Mature respisce precor, peccataq; linquo;
Qui legis, aut audio, quisquis es, istud opus.
Si nona peccata peccata prioribus addas,
Olim hac te contra Concio testis erit.
Hac aliqui tota silentes sua crimina multum,
Mutarunt mores, & noua vita placet.

The same in English.

THou that dost read or heare this worke,
I wish thee to doe this:
Repent in time, and sinne forsake,
Amend what is amisse.
But if thou wilt adde sinne to sinne,
Not minding to amend:
This Sermon shall a witnesse be,
Against thee in the end?
Some that haue heard this read of late,
Lamenting much their sinne:
Haue chang'd their former manners, and
A new life now begin.

To

To the Reader.



Although I was most unwilling that this poore talent and trauel of mine, should euer haue beene broached abroad, and come to light, both because it may seeme as a candle lighted at noone-day; as also, because many other mens doing might more worthily a great deale haue beene published and committed vnto letters; yet because diuers which heard it preached with a liuely voyce were very instant, yea, and more then importunate with me to haue it published, vsing such reasons as I could not greatly gaine-say, I did at last yeeld to their requests: and

To the Reader.

so this vntimely fruit is come abroad to be sold in open markets. Let no man therefore bee offended, that I haue not strained my selfe to fly an high pitch, to foame out the froath of mans wisdome, and to make a great shew of learning, by blowing the bladder of vanitie, till it burst with swelling; but it is not my vse, I seek especially the saluation of the simple & ignorant: and therefore stoope downe to their reach and capacity. Therefore I beseech thee, gentle Reader, accept my good meaning: Reade this without preiudice; like it as thou profitest; so shalt thou haue praise of God, and comfort in thy Conscience.

A SERMON

of Repentance.

LUKE 13.5.

I tell you nay, but except you repent, you shall
all likewise perish.



The occasion of these words of
our Lord and Saviour Jesus
Christ, was, because there
were certaine that shewed him
the Galileans, whose blood Pi-
late had mingled with their
owne Sacrifices, that is, murdered them as
they were sacrificing, and so their blood was
mingled with the blood of the beasts which
were sacrificed. These men therefore thought
that those Galileans were greater sinners then
all other Galileans, because they had suffered
such things: and that those eighteens also, vpon
whom, the Tower of Siloam fel and slew them,
were sinners aboue all the men that dwelt in
Ierusalem. Wherein they did utter a secret cor-
ruption naturally engendred in all men: that is
very sharply to see into the sins of others, seuerely
to censure of the, but in the meane while to

flatter themselves, and to be blind-fold in seeing their owne sinnes. For these men thought, because the like iudgements did not fall vpon them, therefore they were well enough; they were not so great sinners, but rather highly in the fauour of God: according as many doe falsely suppose, that they are alwayes the worst sort of people whom God doeth most strike and presse with his punishing hand: hauing forgotten that God doeth not keepe an ordinary rate here below, to punish euery man as he is worst, or to saue or andcocke him as he is best: but onely taketh some examples, as he thinketh good, for the instruction and aduertisements of all others, and to be as it were looking-glasses, wherein euery man may see his owne face, yea, and his owne canse handled, and that God is a seuerer reuenger of sin: that all men may learne by the example of some, to tremble and beware, lest peraduenture they be worthily constrained to keepe their owne turnes, and to know what they haue deserved. These men which brought these newes to our Saviour Christ, had taken forth this lesson: Whereupon our Saviour is iustly occasioned to correct their erroneous & sinister iudgement, and to teach them that they must not reioyce at the iust punishment of others, but rather be instructed thereby to repent.

And

of Repentance.

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And further, to signifie that God doeth not alwayes most punish the most notorious offenders, as Murtherers, Thieves, Robbers, whores, mongers, Blasphemers, Drunkellers, scoffers, and such like: But reserveth them unto the iudgement of the great day, and as it were setteth them against the day of slaughter, and therefore he answereth them negatively, and saith No, or not so, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish: As if he should say: are ye all of this opinion indeed, that onely monstrous sinners are punished in this world, and others let alone? Or that the Galileans, and those eightene upon whom the Tower of Siloam fell, were greater sinners then all others? Or doe you thinke because the same iudgements haue not light vpon you, therefore you shall sleale away in the darke, and escape the iudgements of God? No, no, you are deceived: For I say vnto you, that except you moorne and lament for your sins, and fall to some agreement with God in time, you (I say, euen you, which are so ready to condemne others, and iustifie your selues) shall not onely perish with the like iudgements in this present world, but be everlastingly condemned in the world to come. So that our Saviour in so saying, doeth thunder downe a most dreadfull sentence vpon all our heads: For he concludeth and setteth downe, that

that all men living vpon the face of the earth, whether they be high or low, rich or poore young or old, noble or vn-noble, learned or vnllearned simple or politicke, of what state, degree, and condition soeuer they be, living and dying without Repentance, shall perish and be damned in hell fire for ever. The scriptures are full of such thunder bolts, Iohn 3. 18. He that beleeues not is damned already: And 2 Cor. 13. 5. Prooue your selues, whether you are in the Faith: examine your selues: know you not your selues that Iesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? Where the Apostle flatly setteth downe that all those which haue not Christ dwelling in their hearts by faith, which is the household sister of Repentance, are no better then reprobates, cast-alwayes, and condemned persons. But because the most people in these dayes are grossely deceiued in Repentance, both concerning what it is, what it meaneth, what it woorketh, what be the qualities and conditions of it, which be the causes, and which be the lets and hindrances: and also why, when, and wherefore we should repent: therefore I haue a present intent to teach, first what is Repentance: secondly, which bee her qualities and effects: thirdly, when we should repent: fourthly, wherefore we should repent: and last of all what letteth vs from repentance. Which order and method

of Repentance.

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thod of teaching, although some may mislike (as indeed with me it is not ordinary) yet considering the matter I haue in hand, I thinke it not inconuenient. But to the matter.

Repentance is an inward sorrowing and continuall mourning of the heart and Conscience for sin, ioyned with faith, and both inward and outward amendment. Inward (I say) in changing the thoughts and affections of the heart, and outward in changing the words and workes from euill to good. This repentance no doubt, was in Dauid, who when he was couertly reprimed by the Prophet Nathan, and his sinnes laid before his eyes, did not stubbornly defend them, and so iustle against God: nor yet secretly excuse them, and banke them ouer, but cryeth out in the bitterness of heart, I haue sinned, and thereupon made the 51 Psalm, a Psalm indeed full of dolour and heauinesse, wherein the Prophet bewaileth his faults, lamenteth his sinnes, and prayeth euen for a new Heart, and a new Spirit, new thoughts, new affections, new promises of amondment of life: so that in Dauid we may see an inward sorrowing, a lasting griefe (as the Booke of Psalmes doeth euery where declare, which layeth him out as it were in an Anatomy) yea, and great reformation, both in inward and outward sins. Here therefore behold what is Repentance.

Like,

Likewise S. Peter through infirmities having
 denied his Lord and Master Christ, and being
 pinced of his owne Conscience and wakened
 with the alarme of a poore Cockes crowing,
 went out of the Court of Pilate, with an heauie
 heart weeping bitterly, and euer after stoutly
 professing Christ euen vnto the death. See
 then what is Repentance. The Prophets, in
 the Olde Testament, exhorting the rebellious
 Iewes vnto Repentance, vse commonly an
 Hebrew worde, which signifies, Turne ye,
 or Returne ye and come backe againe: by
 the which Metaphor is meant, that like as a
 man that is strayed farre out of his way, must
 returne quite backe againe the contrary way:
 So those that haue strayed from the way of
 godlinesse to the way of sinne, must come
 backe againe as fast as euer they went for-
 ward, and altogether change the course of their
 life: So that repentance is an earnest turning
 vnto God, with all your heart, soule and minde.
 Saint Iohn Baptist, and the Apostles in the
 new Testament, exhorting vnto Repentance,
 vse the Greeke word, which signifieth a chan-
 ging of the minde afterward, or after-wit: So
 that those which through their folly, and want
 of former wit, haue slipped into the deepe pit
 and dangerous gulf of sinne, when they come
 vnto themselves, & haue reuoluted their wits,
 will

will be wise afterward, and take heed they ne-
 uer come there againe, according to the Pro-
 uerbe : The burnt, Childs will take heed of the
 fire. By this time, I hope you see what is Re-
 pentance ; It is not euery sorrow, but sorrow
 for sinne ; not for some sinne, but for all sinne ;
 not for an houre ; but for euer : Not for a day ;
 but continually ; Not for a weeke ; but as long
 as we liue. Some thinke euery sorrow is re-
 pentance, but so should Worshings repent.
 Some thinke euery little pang for sinne is Re-
 pentance, so should Pharaoh repent. Some
 thinke all weeping and lamenting for sinne is
 Repentance, so should Esau, Iudas and Cain re-
 pent. Some thinke euery little humbling of
 our selues is Repentance, but so should Ahab
 repent. Some thinke that good workes, and
 good purposes are Repentance, but so should
 euery sicke man repent. Some thinke that a
 reformation of words and deedes are Repen-
 tance, but so should ciuill men repent. Some
 thinke that to cry God mercy is Repentance, &
 so should euery soule repent. You see therefore
 how many are deceiued in Repentance. But if
 you wil see what it is indeed looke backe to that
 which hath bene said before : for he that will
 repent in good earnest, must not hang downe
 his head like a bulrush for a day onely, and so
 haue done : Not cry from the teeth outward,
 • Lord

Lord haue mercy on me, and so away : but hee must make a backe-reckoning, with diligent consideration of his former life as did the Prophet David, Psal. 119. 50. I haue considered my wayes, and turned my feete vnto thy Testimonies. So must every one that meaneth to repent sincke aside into some corner or out-place, that there he may haue room enough to beate his owne Conscience, and to make his Heart smart for his sinnes, by aggravation thereof, and weighing all the circumstances, as in the mouth of Daniel : The Church of God confesseth her sinnes, not lightly, but with wonderfull great exaggefation, and heaping vp one thing to another. So that it is not enough to say, I haue sinned : but to say, I haue most traitterously sinned, I haue most obstinately, carelessly, and rebelliously sinned : I haue monstrously offended in such a place, in such a house, in such a company, on such a day, in such a corner, in the darke, I committed Adultery closely, when I thought none had seene me, in such a chamber I defiled my neighbours wife, mine owne conscience doeth accuse mee of it : in such and such company I haue bene drunke, I haue spoken and railed against Gods Word, I haue mocked the Preachers, I haue spared no oathes nor filthy speech : and now (O Lord) Lord, what an ugly monster
and

and wretched villaine am I: Here I stand
before thy presence, all naked, blind, wounded,
poore, wretched and miserable, having deserved
a thousand damnations, if thou wouldest enter
into iudgement, and try the I also with mee.
Therefore I beseech thee to shew pittie and
compassion vpon mee. Anoint my wounds
with the oyle of mercy, restore mee my sight,
cloathe my nakednesse, enrich mee that am
poore, strengthen me that am weake, helpe me
that am fallen: O bid me not farewell. The
infant ouercommeth his mother with crying,
the childe his Father with weeping, and the
seruant his master by intreaty, and wilt thou
not be intreated O Lord? Thus, I say, if eue-
ry man would speake in his conscience to God,
and thus narrowly, or more narrowly examine
himselfe, undoubtedly he were in the way to
Repentance.

But alas, it is a world to see how the blinde
buzzards, and crooked Canker-wormes of
this World goe awry from this rule, decei-
uing themselves with the bare title and na-
ked name of Repentance. Many (indeed) can
talke of it, but few walke in it: many speake
of it, but few feele it: many describe it, but
few know it. It is hid and locked vp from
the World, and revealed onely vnto Gods,
Children: many thinke they haue caught it
when

when they haue but the shadow of it. It is so high that few can reach it : It is so deepe that few can come to the bottome of it : It is so narrow, that few can enter into it : So wide, that few can comprehend it : So slippery, that few can hold it : So secret, that few can finde it : Therefore my beare brethren, I beseech you let vs pray vnto our God, that hee would reueale vnto vs this mystery which is hid from the world, that we may see it, and know it, finde it, and feele it to our endlesse comfort, through Christ Iesus, which grace he grant vs.

But now to the second point, concerning the qualities and Fruites of Repentance : one especiall qualitie of Repentance is alwayes to bring with it remission of sinnes : For where true Repentance goeth before, there remission of sinnes must necessarily follow after : Not that Repentance deserueth remission of sinnes, but because where God worketh Repentance, there hee pardoneth sinnes because of his promise, as in Ezekiel 18. 17. When the wicked turneth away from his wickednesse that hee hath committed, and doeth that which is lawfull and right, he shall save his soule alive, And againe, Esay 55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his wayes, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginations, and turne vnto the Lord, and hee will haue mercy vpon him. So here wee see to whom

of Repentance.

I I

Whom forgiveness of sinnes, and the mercy of God belongeth : namely to the penitent sinners, to those that leave sinne, and embrace godlinesse, to those that forsake their owne wayes and imaginations, and turne vnto the Lord. And as for such as walke in their owne wayes & follow the delights of sin, without any sorrow or purpose to leave them, they haue nothing to doe with the mercy of God : and though Iesus Christ had suffered a thousand deaths (which could not be) yet shal no impenitent sinner haue remission of his sins by his death, nor any other benefit of his passion : for they belong onely to his Church and chosen people here vpon earth. He therefore that is not of the Church, he that is not grafted into Christ by faith, he that is not a member of his mysticall body, can inioy nothing by Christs death : If any man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch & withereth, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, & they burne. Ioh. 15. 16. We reade in the 29. of Deut. how God barreth all stubborne sinners from his mercy, & doeth most terribly shoot out against them, He that heareth the words of this curse, and blessoth himselfe in his heart, saying ; I shall haue peace, although I walke according to the stubbornnesse of mine owne heart, thus adding drunkennes to thirst : the Lord will not be mercifull vnto him, but then the wrath of

the Lord, and hisiealoufie shall smoake against that man, and euery curse that is written in this booke shall light vpon him. So that God saith plainly he hath no mercy for such as walke in vaine delights of sin, & in the stubbornesse of their owne harts, adding drunkennes to thirst: that is, ioyning one horrible sin to another: yet for all that it is a wonder to see how the blinde wormes of the world deceiue themselves. For they thinke, whatsoeuer they say, whatsoeuer they doe, be it good, be it euill, whether they repent or not repent, yet they shall be saued by Christs death: as though they would make it a balme to their sins, and so worke that villany against Christ; I hope to be saued by Christs death aswell as the best of them all, say some. But where is thy repentance, thou miserable wretch: Dost thou thinke that Gods mercy is common to all? And Christs death a balme for thy sins? No, no, when it cometh to the vpshot, thou shalt hop-short. For it will proue far otherwile. For thou shalt finde Gods mercy turned into iustice, and Christs death into worme-wood, because thou hatedst knowledge and chusedst not the feare of the Lord. Thus you see, my deare brethren, that Repentance must needs goe before forgiveness of sin, and where it leadeth not the way, there the gates of Gods mercy are shut vp: and this is the first qualitie

qualitie of repentance. It hath also another
 condition, and that is, to alter and change men
 from that they were before, not in substance &
 proportion of the body, but in the qualities and
 conditions of the minde. For whosoever hath
 truly repented, you shall by and by see a most
 marvellous and wonderfull change in him, so
 that he will not doe as he hath done, nor speake
 as he hath spoken, nor company as he hath
 companied, nor play the good-fellow (as they
 terme it) as he was wont to doe, nor run the
 same excesse of ryot as he was wont. And this
 is that amazeth the world, and causeth them to
 bristle & foame at the mouth like wild Bores,
 and to speake euill of them that turne unto
 God: For the world loneth his owne, and can
 not abide that God should plucke one feather
 from his wings; but repentance doeth violent-
 ly pull men out of the clawes of Sathan, and
 change them from the condition of the world:
 for it maketh of proude, humble: of hurtfull,
 harmelesse: of cruel, meeke: of wolues, lambs:
 of Lyons, sheepe: of adulterers, chaste liuers: of
 drunkards, sober men: of swearers, reuerent
 speakers: of haters, friends: of despisers, im-
 bracers: of scoffers, louers: of earthly, hea-
 uenly: Diuells, Saints: all these worke
 repentance, Paul travelled towards Damascus
 a Wolfe, a Persecuter, a Blood-sucker, a Pa-

ter, a despiser : but ere he came there, he was quite changed, and cleane of another minde : so mighty was he that met him in the way. And he Jesus Christ sent downe the holy Ghost vpon his Disciples, according to his promise, there were some scoffers at Ierusalem, which mocked, and said, They are full of new wine : But the same men cried out by and by after ; Men and brethren, what shall we doe to be saued ?

Here was a most wonderfull and sodaine change : For then the force of repentance, when God striketh it into the heart of a man, and driueth the naile to the head (as they say) it effecteth that which all the wisdom and policy of man is not able to bring to passe ; & when they haue prouled hither and thither and laid their heads together, and sought all the corners of their wits, yet can they not tell which way to turne their hand, or where to begin to change the heart of a man, and to conuert him to God. Therefore repentance is stronger then all the whole world, and worketh that which all men with their naturall wits, fine heads, and deepe deuices cannot compasse : for the conuersion of a sinner is a worke supernatural. Here then we haue a glasse to behold our selues in, whether euer we haue repented, or no : For if we finde not this change, and alteration in vs, we haue not repented, and so consequently remaine vn-

der damnation. Therefore let every man look
unto himselfe: for marke how much he is chan-
ged and altered from his former wicked wayes,
so much hath he repented. And he that is the
same man he was thre, foure, eight, nay thirtie
yeres agoe, surely, surely, he hath not repented,
and therefore abideth in damnation. I mar-
uell then how these men, which neuer felt any
change or alteration wrought in them, nay,
whose Conscience telleth them that they are
not changed, nor know what it meaneth, can
haue hope of saluation: vntill peradventure
they beleue not this doctrine, or thinke it to be
false. I will send ouer these men to such as
haue bene in the like case they now are, and
yet thought they might doe well enough for
all that, although both blinde in iudgement,
and corrupt in conuersation. I haue knowne
and doe know men, which before their conuer-
sion and inward change, were counted as ho-
nest men as euer brake bread, and as substan-
tiall men as any could be, and as true dealers,
vpight liuers, good house-keepers, as any of
their neighbours: yea, and they had the same
opinion of themselues too: and yet notwithstan-
ding when they haue felt repentance working
this change and alteration in them, through
the power of the Spirit, at the preaching of the
Word: and when they haue had new hearts
given

giuen them to diſcerne better, and new eyes to ſee better; as men come out of a dampe, haue wondered and maruelled at the palpable and groſſe darkneſſe they were in beſore, and haue buſt forth into theſe words, that they would not be in the ſame caſe they were beſore, no not for all the worlds goods: for if they had died in that caſe, they were ſure they ſhould haue bene damned. But I pray you what caſe were they in beſore: were they not good honeſt men, and well accounted of, and honeſt liuers, and well taken whereſoeuer they came: ſurely they were ſo taken in the world; but now they think farre otherwiſe of themſelues, their eyes being opened, and their iudgements inlightned: for now they ſee what they ſaw not beſore: now they vnderſtand that God condemneth many whom the world iuſtifieth. He thinketh this example ſhould make ciuill and worldly men feare and ſuſpect themſelues, and know their owne miſery beſore God. For thoſe men were as good as they beſore their conuerſion, and yet afterward confeſſed that they were plunged to the bottome of hell and drowned in the depth of damnation. He that hath eares to heare, let him heare: and he that hath eyes to ſee, let him ſee: for if men will ſtill ſooth themſelues for all this, that they ſhall be ſaued, without feeling any change or worke of repentance, it will coſt them

of Repentance.

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them full deere in the end. For Christs wordes will proue true, that whosoever repenteth not shall be damned, that is, whosoever doeth not feele in himselfe what is repentance, and finde in himselfe the qualities thereof, shall be condemned: for where repentance is, there be the qualities of repentance; and where the qualities be absent, there is no true repentance. So that whome Christ saith, Except ye repent, yee shall all perish; it is all one as if he had said, except you know the trueth of repentance, except you can proue vnto your Consciences the forgiveness of your sins, except ye feele a change and alteration in the bottome of your hearts for all your former lewd wayes & misdeameours, you shall surely perish and be damned. But let vs a little further search out the qualities of repentance. The Apostle in the 7. chap. of the 2. Epistle to the Corinthians setteth downe seuen notable qualities and effects of repentance.

The first of them hee nameth Care: For behold (saith he) this thing, that you have beene godly sorry, what care it hath wrought in you: this is an earnest study, & as it were, a taking thought to please God: for where true repentance hath once wrought, there followeth great care afterward: care (I say) to liue in the obedience of God: care to keepe a good Conscience, care to reforme our households, care to in-

Strive our wives, children, and servants in the
 knowledge of God, care to pray with them
 morning and evening: and generally, care to
 performe all duties belonging to God: So that
 Repentance is not a carelesse, but a carefull
 thing. Let no man thinke therefore, that al-
 though they welter in carelesnesse of the flesh,
 & sleepe in security all the dayes of their life, yet
 their repentance is good enough: yea, & though
 they spend whole dayes, nights, moneths, and
 yeeres in vanities, playes and pastime, in idle-
 nesse, fond delights, pleasures & voluptuousnes,
 in negligence of all duty, forgetfulness of God, &
 contempt of all good things: yet for all this they
 repent for their sins, and hope to be saved as well
 as any other. But alas, how can these things
 stand together, to repent for sin, and to delight
 in sinne, to hate sin, & to loue sin, to fly from sin,
 and to follow after sin: But these men I per-
 ceive would faine make S. Paul a lyar: for he
 saith, A man hath neuer repented except he be
 carefull afterward to please God, they say they
 doe repent, and haue repented, although they
 liue neuer so wretchedly and carelesly. But
 when all licentious & lewd liuers, filthy whores-
 mongers, beastly belly-gods, and carelesse cai-
 tiffes, come to the kingdome of God, and are
 saved, then shall these men come also with
 them, to be saved by carelesse repentance.

The next quality, and effect of repentance is named Clearing of your selues, that is discharging of our selues when sin doeth accuse vs, and lay things to our charge: so when sin and Satan doe terrifie the conscience of the poore penitent sinner, by and by he flieth vnto God, and asketh forgiveness through Iesus Christ, so clearing himselfe, and making his apologie against Sinne and Satan: like as a man that is presented into the Court vpon suspicion of whoredome, or any other notorious crime, must cleare himselfe by witnes, of that which is laid to his charge; so the conscience that is cited by Satan before the iustice and Iudgement-seate of God, cleareth it selfe by Repentance, and asketh forgiveness through Iesus Christ. So that here we may see a wonderfull fruit of a penitent conscience: it cannot abide the accusation of sinne, it cannot be quiet till it be reconciled vnto God, and so haue peace with it selfe. For this is to be noted in a godly man, that when he hath committed any sinne, and his Conscience telleth him of it, by and by he shal lead within him, and is all heauy, and cannot sleepe quietly till he haue gotten into some corner, where he may mourne and lament to the full, & confesse & lay open himselfe vnto God, and so cleare himselfe through Iesus Christ, his conscience bearing him witnes y his sin is forgiven. Where,

as contrariwise, the ungodly man, when his conscience accuseth him of sinne, he dispatcheth away all such thoughts, and treadeth them under foote : and by and by calleth for a paire of Cards or Tables, or some merry companion to drue away time, and to put out all such thoughts out of his head : and so in dede he increaseth them more and more, and causeth them to rankle inwardly.

The third qualitie is called Indignation: that is, a mortall and deadly hatred against sinne, as when a man doeth shudder and shake, and as it were grind his teeth at the remembrance of his sinnes : For this is alwayes in the penitent person, to loathe and abhorre all sinne from his heart, both his owne sinnes, and the sinnes of others, and to hate it as the diuell himselfe, which is the author of it : and to flee from it, as from the very cut-throat and hangman of his soule, and to know it to be the onely thing that blindeth and hardeneth, that separateth from God, and procureth all plagues and diseases, both of body and soule against vs. Therefore he spitteth at it in defiance, and disdaineth it, and stoppeth his nose at the stinke of it, wheresoeuer he smelleth it.

The fourth thing is Feare, which is a certaine awe of God, when a man is afraid to displease him : For the penitent person feareth alwayes

wayes, and being priuy to his owne infirmities
 and weaknesse (when God neuer so little with-
 draweth his grace and leaueth him alone) wor-
 keth his saluation with feare and trembling.
 He will not presume vpon former grace to
 commit any sin, or flatter himselfe in the mer-
 cy of God, & the things that he hath already ta-
 sted of God, to yeld to some little sin, thinking
 he may doe that and be the childe of God well
 enough, because some of Gods children haue
 fallen into greater: but rather he trembleth at
 the least motion of sinne and is afraid of the
 temptation which Satan trappeth in the way, &
 is afraid when the temptations of sin are vpon
 him, to satisfie the hunger of sinne: but
 rather he fighteth against sinne when sinne
 fighteth against him, and presenteth the feare
 of God before his eyes (as godly Ioseph in the
 assaults of Potiphers wife) to be as it were a
 tower of defence, and well-spring of life to a-
 uoide the shares of death.

The fift thing is Desire, that is, hung-
 ting and thirsting after righteousness. For the pe-
 nitent man is ranshed with a desire of good
 things: he desireth to be every day better then,
 other, he desireth to leaue every day some sinne
 he desireth to pray, he desireth new knowelge
 and new vnderstanding of heauenly thing.
 He desireth to heare Sermons, and wil straine
 himselfe

himselfe to heare them. He desireth the company of the godly, thinking himselfe in heauen when he is amongst them. He desireth the salvation of his very enemies, and prayeth for them. All these, and many other such like desires, are in a penitent man.

The first qualitie is Zeale, which consisteth in the earnest embracing of vertue: and hatred of vice: so that the penitent person is zealous of euery good thing, zealous of Gods glory in all places, in all companies, and amongst all persons. He cannot abide that Gods honour should be impeached, or his name blasphemmed, or his glory trampled vnder foote by wicked men: but will open his mouth to reprove the wicked, and stand stoutly in the defence of Gods glory. He is not like the Atheists and dissemblers, which are alwayes as the company, that is, godly amongst the godly, a Protestant amongst Protestants, wicked among the wicked, a Papist amongst Papists, a worldling amongst worldlings, and a swearer amongst swearers, a weather-cocke that turneth with euery wind. The penitent man I say is not of that stamp: but he is constant and zealous in all good things: he is zealous both against the pleasures and profits of sinne: though he might winne a whole world, or pleasure himselfe neuer so much by committing sinne against God, yet he will refuse

fulse it: for he hath learned from Christs mouth that it shall not profit a man to win the whole world, and to lose his owne soule.

The last thing is Reuenge, that is, the penitent person is so offended with the sinne he hath committed, that he will be reuenged of himselfe for it. As for example, if he haue offended in gluttony, he wil reuenge himselfe by fasting two or thre dayes after. If he haue offended in whooredome, he will be reuenged of his lusts by haltering and bridling of them euer after. If he haue offended in couetous ratching and polling of other mens goods, he will be reuenged on himselfe by restitution, as was godly & penitent Zacheus: & this indeed is a speciall fruit of Repentance, to refoyme our selues in those things wherein we haue most offended. Now then we see (my deare brethreu) what lieth in the belly of Repentance, and which be her inward: so that we must needs now come to the unlacing and unbotwelling of Christs words: Except ye repent (saith he) ye shall all perish: that is, except ye haue this forenamed Care, you shall all be damned: except ye haue this clearing of your selues, you shall be damned: except you haue this Indignation, you shall be damned: except you haue this Feare, you shall be damned: except you haue this Desire, you shall all be damned: except you haue this Zeale, you shall

shall all be damned: except you haue this Re-
 uenge, you shall all be damned. For our Sa-
 uiour Christ doeth not speake of the bare name
 of Repentance, but of Repentance with her fur-
 niture and appurtenances: so that whosoever
 hath not repentance with all her qualities and
 effects, or at least, some measure of them, he
 hath no Repentance indeed, and therefore shall
 be damned: For except you repent, yee shall all
 perish. But mee thinketh that I heare some
 man say: here is nothing but damnation, dam-
 nation: you preach nothing but the Law, let
 vs heare of the Gospel. My brethren, I pro-
 test vnto you, that I speake in loue whatsoe-
 uer I speake, I desire the saluation of you all.
 If I could win but two of all this congrega-
 tion, I would count my selfe happy, and thinke
 that God had greatly blessed my labours. And
 undoubtedly, If I knew any nearer way to
 bring you to God, then by preaching the Law
 to make you know your selues, surely, surely, I
 would vse it: Or if I could be perswaded that
 the preaching of the Gospel, & mercy, would doe
 you more good, you should heare of nothing but
 Gospel, Gospel, Mercy, Mercy. But alas, I
 see that euery carelesse and ignorant man pre-
 sumeth vpon Gods mercy. I see that euery fil-
 thy liuer, and notorious blasphemers abuseth
 Gods mercy, in applying it to himselfe without
 repen

of Repentance.

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repentance, so that they would make Gods mercy a cloake for their sinnes: I see that euery man would faine be flattered in sinne, and heare of it no moze, but haue the Gospel preached, which indeed belongeth not vnto them, continuing in their stubbornesse: But onely to the penitent sinner which forsaketh himselfe and groaneth and panteth vnder the burden of his sinne. Therefore when I see you humbled with the conscience of your sinnes, and groane and pant vnder the burthen of them: when I see your faces blubbered with weeping, and your hearts mollified, and sorrowing with care, then will I comfort you, and cease to preach the Law. But I pray you, will you steale, murder, and commit adultery, and yet heare of mercy? Will you mocke, sweare, blaspheme, and raile, and yet heare of mercy? Will you serue sinne, hate vertue, and follow your owne lusts, and yet heare of mercy? Would you haue plaisters before you haue wounds? Would you haue physicke before you be sicke? Would you be let blood before you haue neede?

Would you not account him a foolish Physician, that will minister Physicke to a whole man? Would you not thinke him an unskillfull Chirurgeon that will apply a gentle salme to an old festured soze, and not rather corrie it? Then know you my brethren, that because you
are

are full of grosse humors, you must haue strong
purgation, because you are full of old festered
wounds, you must haue corrosiue salues : for
that is best for you, and the speediest way to
recoier your health : and forasmuch as you be
rough horses, you must haue a rough rider, and
hard knotty timber must haue hard wedges, &
hard strokes with a beetle. We preach the law,
to driue you to Christ, we preach iudgement, to
make you to seeke mercy, we preach damna-
tion to bring you to saluation. But to preach mer-
cy and forgiveness before men see their sins, or
know their misery by the preaching of the law,
is to preach the Gospel vnprofitably : For he
that is ignorant of the Law, knoweth not what
misery is in himselfe, or what mercy is in God.

What father is there, who if his child should
play the stubborne boy, and disobey him in eue-
ry thing hee commandeth, would stroke his
head, and say he were a good boy : & not rather
seuerely correct him, and whip him with a rod :
What master will commend his seruant for
doing what he list, and not what he comman-
deth him : Euen so we may not disobey, and doe
euill, and looke to be flattered too, & not rather
chidden. Let vs know then, that though God
use searing, lancing, or cording, and seatching
of the bones, and other violent remedies : yet
in the meane while he procureth our health by
them.

them. And let vs further vnderstand, that forasmuch as there is no other meanes to draw vs to saluation, but by the cleansing of al our vices, & the same cleansing cannot be done but by violence, when we be warned by the doctrine of the Law, so as our owne consciences accuse vs, although we like well to be noted and then flattered and soothed, yet let vs seeke to be spoken vnto earnestly, to haue our faults told vs, and to be made ashamed of them, & to haue our dishonesty discovered, and not desire to be pleased: For it were next way to make vs rot in our owne filthinesse, if we should hold it in secret: and it would cost too deare the setting on, if we should be so flattered by men, and in the meane season the heauenly Iudge, thunder downe vpon vs.

Therefore, when any man cometh to a Sermon, let him first and foremost make his reckoning to be rebuked, as meet it is, and let him vnderstand that it is for his profit that he is not soothed. And if he haue itching eares, let him lay them away from him, assuring himselfe else, that he is fore-closed, so shall he neuer receiue the doctrine to his profit and instruction; and let him be content to haue his sores rubbed and bewrayed, that he may be brought to that which is for his wel-fare. If any man please a sicke body, what shall become of him? Shall he giue him drinke euery minute of an

houre : shall giue him wine, whereas hee should giue him water : shall hee giue him sallets : it were the next way to poyson him. To be short, it is certaine that a man doth alwayes seek his owne death, when he would haue men to sooth him. But now, which is better : either that he which hath the ordering of a sicke man, should yeeld to all his desires, or that he should hinde him, notwithstanding that he chafe and gnash his teeth, because hee may not haue his will in his desires : You see therefore how dangerous a thing it is to flatter and raise vp men with the preaching of Peter, before they haue bene cast downe with the sense of Gods iudgement. Cease therefore to open your mouth, to make hue and cry ouer the Countrey, saying : They preach nothing but the Law, the Law, Damnation Damnation ; vnlesse you will take in Christ too, and make him one of the number, and accuse him of want of wisdome, because he preacheth and cryeth out, that whosoever repenteth not, shall be condemned. For my part, I preach the Gospell to whom the Gospell belongeth, and the Law to whom the Law belongeth, and iudgement to whom iudgement appertaineth. And therefore hold your peace, and be content to be ruled by the wisdome of God. But now let vs proceede to the third general point, which is the time when we shall

shall repent. The holy Ghost in the Scriptures pointeth vs to the present time, and exhorteth vs to make that the time of our Repentance; Ioel 2. 12. Therefore also now the Lord saith: Turne you vnto me withall your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; Likewise, in the 3 chap. to the Hebrews: Exhort one another, while it is called to day, lest any of you bee hardned, through the deceitfulness of sin. And in the same chapter: To day if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts, as in the prouocation. So that now, euen now, euen now is the time of repentance.

Now while hee calleth, now whilst he speaketh, now whilst hee knocketh, let vs now therefore heare, let vs now therefore obey, let vs now therefore redeeme this day, this present Wednesday, which haue foreclosed so many dayes, which haue so long hardned our hearts, which haue let so many good things runne out and spill besides: let vs take vp this day, and make it the day of our Repentance. Although wee could neuer be moued with any Sermon hitherto, yet let vs now be moued once at last. Let vs now say, this shall be my day of repentance, I will deferre it no longer, but now will I turne vnto my God, & forsake all my former wicked wayes, & mine olone imaginatiens: I will now change the course of my life, & begin

anew againe. I will be acquainted with Gods
 word, and take counsell there how to doe, how to
 behaue my selfe in euery action, I will not only
 reforme my selfe, but also my whole household,
 wife, children, and seruants according vnto the
 same. Thus my deare brethren, I beseech you,
 purpose in your hearts without any further de-
 lay: and be not like to Epicures & slack-graces,
 which say, Youth will be youthfull, and youth
 will haue a course, and what should we make
 it so holy when we are yong: tush, there needes
 but a sigh an houre before death, let vs be mer-
 ry now, we shall neuer bee younger, we will
 repent when we are old. As if (poore soules)
 they had repentance in their sleepes, and at
 their commandement, and that they could re-
 pent when they list. No, no, these fellows shall
 pay for their presumption: For God will giue
 them ouer to hardnesse of heart and impeniten-
 cy, because they tooke so much vpon them, and
 made so long delayes, that in the meane season
 they might enioy the profits and pleasures of
 sinne. Therefore (good brethren) let vs not put
 it off from day to day, but let vs now seeke the
 Lord whilest he may be found, and call vpon
 him whilest he is nere: let vs take time while
 time is, for time and tide carrieth for no man:
 Let vs know this to be the time of our visitati-
 on. Our Saviour Christ wept ouer Ierusalem,
 because

of Repentance.

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because they knew not the time of their visitation. Hee reprimoued the Jewes, because they could discern the face of the skye, but could not discern the signes of the times. And surely in the end it will turne to our destruction, if we will not know this to be the day of mercy, the time of grace, wherein God stretcheth forth his hand vnto vs, & wisdom cryeth out in the streets. Therfore now while we haue the light, let vs walke as children of the light: the night cometh when no man can worke. It shall be too late to call for mercy after this life, when the gates of mercy are shut vp; and repentance will be too late. Oh deare Christians, let vs remember the fine foolish virgins, which because they ouer-slowed the time, had heauen gates barred vp against them. Let vs also remember the fearefull and dolefull example of the rich Glutton, which being in hell torments, yelled and yelped for the least ease and helpe that might be, and could not haue it. An hundred thousand times therefore better it is for vs, to leaue our sinnes now, to mourne for them now, & now to repent, then hereafter (alas) when it shall be too late: better now a great deale to take some paines, to stricke our selues to leaue our sinnes, and to make our hearts smart for them, then to bee condemned for euer, and to cry in the bottome of hell: We haue wearied our

selues in the way of wickednes and destruction
 and we haue gone through dangerous wayes,
 but we haue not knowne the way of the Lord.
 What hath pride profited vs? What profit
 hath the pompe of riches brought vs? All these
 things are passed away like a shadow, and as
 a shadowe that passed by. We haue set our selues
 against the children of God, we haue had them
 in derision, and in a parable of reproach: Wee
 foolles thought their liues madnesse, & their end
 with dishonor: but lo, they are counted amongst
 the children of God, & their portion is amongst
 the Saints: Wherefore let vs knowe the time of
 our calling, and let vs not bee worse then the
 fowles of the ayre: the Turtle, the Crane, and
 the Swallow, obserue the time of their com-
 ming: the husband man taketh his time, the
 Sparrow watcheth his tides: Wherefore let vs
 also take the time, and turne to the Lord, whilst
 it is said to day: which grace God grant vs.
 Now let vs returne to the fourth point, concer-
 ning the causes which may moue vs vnto re-
 pentance. Herein I haue obserued nine speciall
 things. First, the great mercy of God leadeth vs vnto
 repentance, as Rom. 9. The bountifullnesse
 of God leadeth vs vnto repentance, saith the
 Apostle: God doth continually follow vs with
 his mercies and benefites, both concerning our
 soules

of Repentance.

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Soules and bodies, we haue no good thing which we haue not receiued at his hands, we hold all that we haue, of him & to him we are beholding for all: great is his mercy towards our bodies, and euery mercy & benefit either towards soule or body calleth vs to repentance: hee giueth vs meat, drinke, and cloathing, these call vs to repentance: hee keepeth vs at his owne cost and charges here below, this calleth vs to repentance: the Sun, the Moone, and the Stars call vs vnto repentance: the birds of the ayre, the fishes of the Sea, and the frutes of the earth, cry out vpon vs both loud and still, Repent, repent: All creatures moue vs vnto repentance. Our Creation calleth vs, our Redemption cryeth, our Sanctification knocketh, and our Election moueth vs to repentance: What could God doe more for his Vineyard that hee hath not done? Therefore let vs repent.

Secondly, the iudgements of God moue vs vnto Repentance: for all the Thunder bolts, Plagues, and punishments, which God hath thowne downe vpon obstinate sinners, from the beginning of the world, are so many warning peeces vnto vs, to awake vs out of the dead sleep of sin, and to pricke vs to repentance. As in 1 Cor. 10. When the Apostle had cited diuers great iudgements of God against the old Israelites for diuers sins, hee concludeth:

Now all these things came vnto them for examples, and were written to admonish vs, vpon whom the ends of the world are come. So that all the iudgements wee read of in the Scriptures, are as so many admonitions, and as it were Cart-ropes to draw vs to Repentance. All the iudgements wee reade of, doe see, and heare of every day, knocke with maine strokes, beate downe right vpon our consciences to repentance. The ugly monsters, strange births, and fire constellations, unknowne comets, sodaine deaths, maruellous droughts, vnwonted snowes, horrible inundations, forraine wonders, strange apparitions, threatnings of heauen above, with flaming and shooting fire, trembling of the earth vnder our fete, and our houses ouer our heads, as of late dayes: What are all these, but as it were great Cranes with beames and Cable ropes to draw vs to the Lord by repentance?

Thirdly, the word of God helpeth vs to repentance: For as God in the old time sent his Prophets both early and late, to call the rebellious Iewes to repentance; so hee sendeth abroad the Preachers and messengers in these dayes to sound vp the Trumpet of his Word, and to ring the swete Bells of Aaron amongst them, to awake them to repentance: but alas, how lightly are they regarded? Who heareth their

their boyes : But surely this is the last remedy that God hath appointed : and if this will not moue vs to repentance, if this will not cure vs, then are we altogether incurable.

Fourthly, the infinite number of finnes we haue committed, ought to bee so many spurres in our sides to picke vs to repentance. It is sufficient (saith S. Peter) that wee haue spent the time of our life after the lusts of the Gentiles, walking in wantonnesse of lusts, drunkennesse, gluttony, drinkings, and all abominable idolatries. Now therefore it is time to repent. Oh that men would looke backe to themselves, as they were fortie, thirtie, twentie, or ten yeeres agoe ! Oh that they would call to minde their open and secret finnes, & me thinketh it should make their hearts bleed within their bellies to thinke vpon them : Oh that they would consider how much time they haue mispent, and how many good things, they haue neglected, and altogether omitted.

Fiftly, the shortnesse of our life calleth earnestly vpon vs to repent. The time of our life is sixtie yeeres and ten, and if they were to eighty yeeres, yet is their strength but labour and sorrow, and so it is cut off quickly, and waies away, saith the Prophet David : we haue spent our yeeres as a thought, therefore hee addeth, Teach vs to number our dayes, that wee may apply

apply our hearts to wisdom. Our life, for the shortnesse and inconstancie of it, in the Scriptures, is compared to grasse, to a vapour, to smoke, to a weavers Shuttle, which glideth away swiftly. Euen so the dayes of men passe away, no man knoweth how. Man is of a short continuance (saith Iob) and full of trouble. Experience teacheth vs, that to day a man, to morrow none. Hence alway we must all, here is no abiding place for vs : how soone we know not, Therefore let vs repent.

Sixthly, the small number of those which shall be saved, ought to thrust vs forward to repentance. Striue to enter in at the narrow gate; for many (I say vnto you) will seeke to enter in, and shall not be able, saith Christ, Luke 13. 24. And in another place he saith, The gate is strait, and the way narrow that leadeth vnto life, and few there be that finde it. If men would consider of this, it would make them looke better about them, and try with themselues whether they be of that small number or no.

Seuenthly, Death threatens vs, which is very terrible to the flesh, and the remembrance of it very bitter to a man that is souled and soked in the pleasure of this world. It flattereth no man, it regardeth no person, it weigheth no friendship, it careth not for rewards, it is very grim, ugly, and cruell, and killeth downe right where

where it hitteth. Therefore let vs repent.

Eighthly, the day of iudgement and second appearing of the Son of man. He will come as a theefe in the night, in the which the heauens shall passe away with a noyse, and the Elements shall melt with heat, and the earth with the workes that are therein shall be burnt vp. Seeing therefore that all these things must be dissolued, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conuersation, and godlinesse? saith S. Peter 3.3. The Lord Iesus shall shew himselfe from heauen with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, rendering vengeance vnto them that know not God, and obey not the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ saith the Apostle, 1 Thess. 1. I saw (saith Iohn Reu. 20.) a great white throne, and one that sate on it, from whose face fled away both the earth and the heauen, and their place was no more found. And I saw the dead, both great and small, stand before God, & the bookes were opened, and another booke was opened, which is the booke of life, and the dead were iudged of those things which were written in the bookes, according to their workes; and the Sea gaue vp her dead which were in her, and death and hell deliuered vp their dead which were in them; and they were iudged every man according to his workes.

In these places we see both the suddenesse,
the

the fearefulnesse & glory of Christs comming.

For he shall not come p^ore and contemptuously, as in the first visitation, but he shall come very princely, royally, and triumphantly, to the great terror of his enemies, when a consuming fire shall goe before him, and ten thousand thousands of Angels waite vpon him; at what time the Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines, and the mighty men, & euery bond-man, and euery free-man shall hide themselves in dens, and among the rockes of mountaines, and say to the rockes and mountaines, fall on vs, and hide vs from the p^{re}sence of him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lambe: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand? Reuel. 6. Therefore let vs repent.

The last thing is Hell torments, then the which nothing is more intollerable. Therefore saith Christ, Matth. 9. If thine hand cause thee to offend, cut it off, it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, then hauing two hands, to goe into hell, into the fire that neuer shall bee quenched, where the worme dyeth not, and the fire neuer goeth out. The Scripture speaketh terribly to our senses concerning the estate of the damned persons, calling it hell fire, damnation, the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for euer. In the thirtieth Chapter of the Prophecie

Propheſie of Eſay, it is called Tophet, and is
 euen prepared of old, it is euen prepared for the
 King, he hath made it deepe and large, the bur-
 ning thereof is fire and much wood, the breath
 of the Lord, like a riuer of brimſtone, doeth
 kindle it. Theſe ſpēches are terrible in them-
 ſelues, and very marueiloſly amaze vs. But if
 I had the tongues of an hundred men, nay of an
 hundred Angels, yet were I not able to utter
 them, as ſome (one day) ſhall ſeele them, much
 leſſe were you able to conceiue them. If all the
 tortures and cruell tormentes that can be deu-
 ſed by the wit of man, were executed vpon ſome
 one, yet were it nothing to this. Wee poore
 wretches thinke there is no paine to a cholicke,
 or a cruell ague: But if all cholickeſ, agues,
 and other ſtrange diſeaſes, could poſſibly light
 vpon one man, it were but a ſce-biting to that
 which is to come. The paine is endleſſe, eaſe-
 leſſe and remedieleſſe. The dayes of their hel-
 liſh tormentes ſhall neuer weare out, nor their
 yēeres come to an end, the longer they continue,
 the leſſe hope they haue: when as many yēeres
 be expired as there be men in the world, and
 ſtarres in the heauens: when as many thou-
 ſand yēeres are ended, as there be ſtones and
 ſands by the Sea-ſhore, yet ſtill there bee ten
 hundred thouſand times ſo many more to come.
 Thoſe that will not now be moued in hearing,
 ſhall

shall then be crushed in pieces in seeling. All
 D.unkards, Swearers, Whore-mongers, Usu-
 rers, Extortioners, Lyars, Focker, Contem-
 ners, Seture persons, Jolly-fellowes, Roy-
 string Ruffians, Lusty-bloods, the braue lads
 of the World, and all other unbelieuers, shall
 one day be apprehended, and arraigned besoe
 the Barre of Gods Tribunall-seate, where the
 Maiestie of God shall stand aboue them with
 a naked Sword of Vengeance, and a Scepter
 of Justice: the Diuell, that cld Sathan, shall
 stand on the one side to accuse them, and their
 owne consciences on the other side to condemne
 them; and the gasping gulfe of hell vnderneath
 them, ready to swallow them vp for euermore.
 Then shall the dreadfull sentence of eternall
 woe and damnation proceed against them, Goe
 yecursed into hell fire, &c. There they shall
 drinke (as iust recompence of their iniquitie)
 the bitter cup of Gods eternall wrath and in-
 dignation in the kingdome of darkenesse, and
 in the fearefull presence of Sathan, and all the
 cursed enemies of Gods grace: where the dole-
 full Drumme of Gods anger shall euer sound
 through their eares, where shall euer be weep-
 ing and gnashing of teeth: where shall be con-
 fusion, woe, and endlesse lamentation: their
 gripes shall be so great, their groanes so deepe,
 and their garboiles so intollerable, that they
 shall

shall grin like a dog in their infernall conuulsions, and with howling and yelling cry out, wo and alas that euer I was borne : & that I had neuer beene borne, or that my mother had borne me a toad : so, then my condition should haue beene better then it is : cursed was the time I was begot in, the houre I was conceived in, & the day I sucked my mothers paps : cursed I was alwayes, cursed I am, and cursed I shall be enermore : *Wo, wo, how great is my torment : Whose heart doth not melt : Whose cares do not glow : Whose haire do not stand vpon his head to heare these things ? Therefore* (deare brethren) let vs repent. If the mercy of God cannot allure vs, let his iudgements scare vs : If his iudgements cannot scare vs, let the word moue vs : If the word cannot moue vs, let our sins amaze vs, if our sins cannot amaze vs, let the shortnes of our life dampen vs : If the shortnes of our life cannot dampen vs, let the small number of those that shall bee saued & scay vs : if that cannot asray vs, let death terrifie vs : If death cannot terrifie vs, let the day of iudgement shake vs : If that cannot shake vs, let hell torments shudder vs and rend vs in peeces. For verily (my brethren) if none of all these can preuaile, if wee will not for all this repent, but bee still obstinate, then wee shall all perish, and bee damned, according
to

to Christs words. Now let vs proceed to speake of those things which hinder from repentance : which indeed, although they be in number infinite, yet at this time I will lay forth seuen special lets and hinderances vnto repentance.

The first is vnbeliefe : that is, when men will not beleue such things which are spoken and proued vnto them out of the word of God : that is it that vomiteth vp all good things, and poysoneth the very intrayles of a man, and keepe all good graces from vs, as appeareth, Matth. 13. 38. He did not many great workes there for their vnbeliefes sake: and in the fourth Chapter to the Hebrewes it is said : vnto them was the Gospel preached, as also vnto vs : but the word that they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixt with Faith in those that heard it. So that here wee may see, although we heare neuer so much, yet if wee bring not faith with vs, we shall neuer profit vnto repentance : For vnbeliefe taketh vp our hearts for Satan, and refuseth all the wholesome doctrine of Saluation, and doeth so harden men in the wayes of sinne, that in the end they become past feeling, and cannot be touched one whit, either with the iudgements or mercy of God, but count the one as blasts of winde, and make the other a couert for their filthinesse. You shall note some men, who when they haue heard their

their finnes straight ripped up by the Word
 of God, and their full damnation proved by the
 same, without speedy and earnest repentance,
 will breake out into these words of unbelief:
 If this be as he saith, God helpe be, I hope it
 is not so: I trust I shall do well enough for all
 this, as long as I haue a good faith in God,
 and do no body no harme: What I leaue my
 pleasures and my profite for their saying?
 What? doe they thinke none shall be saved,
 but such as read the Scriptures, and heare
 Sermons? God forbid, but those which do not
 go to heare Sermons, should be saved as well
 as they: why, may not one serue God atwell
 at home in his house, hauing good Bookes and
 good Prayers, as by comming to the Church
 to heare Sermons and Service? Alas: these
 men stand too much in their owne light, and
 bewray what folly and ignorance is in them.
 For do they thinke to bee saved by any other
 meanes then God hath appointed? or when
 God hath anouched any thing in his word,
 will they except against it, and so make God a
 lyar: when God hath once set downe a thing,
 and proved it to their faces, will they yet re-
 ply, when God hath told vs, that the preaching
 of the word is the ordinary meanes of our sal-
 uation, shall we hope to be saved, though we
 contemne it, and neuer (or very seldom) heare

it : Is not this plaine infidelity and unbelieve, that when God saith one thing wee will say another : when God saith yea, we will say no, I hope not so : Yea surely, that is it that stoppeth the way to Gods graces, and barreth vs out from repentance.

The second let is, the presumption of Gods mercy : for if men be sharply reprovued for their sin, and exhorted to repentance, by and by they talke couertly, saying ; God is mercifull, God is mercifull : as though God were made all of mercy, and that there were no iustice in him at all. And thus the wicked make Gods mercy an occasion to sinne. Which thing the Prophet Nahum in the first of his Prophecy doth sharply reproue : The Lord (saith he) is slow to anger, but he is great in power, & will not surely cleare the wicked. But because I haue spoken before of this presuming and misapplying of Gods mercy, I will here passe it ouer, and willing you to note it as one speciall let vnto Repentance.

The thirde hinderance is, the example of the multitude : so that doth hearten and imbolden men vnto sinne : as when many Birds flicker and flocke together, they fall vpon the baite without any feare ; but one or two alone will be a fraid : euen so the examples of many sin companions doe imbolden men to run through the

the snares of Sathan, without any mistrust. Therefore it is said in Exod. 23. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to doe euill. This is the thing which hindereth a great number from God: for they neuer look vp vnto God, to his word, but stare vpon the common doings of most men, and examples of the world: thinking if they doe as the most men doe, and as their fathers haue done before them, they are socke sure, and on an euen ground. And therefore ariseth their diuillish prouerbe: Doe as the most men doe, and the fewest will speake ill of you. But they haue forgotten Saint Pauls rule, Rom. 12. Fashion not your selues like vnto this World. These fellows that stand vpon multitudes, will reason thus: We see none of the great ones of the world, none of the Noble, none of the Rich, none of the wise and prudent receiue this doctrine, but onely a few shake-ragges, and beggarly Rascals; and therefore it is a token that it is nothing worth, and that it is doubtfull, and not for vs to meddle withall. Loe what thoughts may crepe into our heads and how sily Sathan may trumpe in our way and blind-fold vs, and lead vs alway in the darke, by doting vs with the example of the multitude. Therefore let vs take heed of those pit-fals which Sathan layeth in our way, and not bee carried alway with those thoughts

and crafty. The wicked beare themselves in hand, that they shall winne the game, and that the gale goeth on their side, & there is nothing but croaking long before it be day, & great triumphing among them before any stroke be given, and that because they are but a handful of people, and they a great multitude, and that in a manner the whole world agreeth with them to praise our death. Thus the diuell doth cast a mist before their eyes, and closely leads them away from repentance. Therefore deere brethren, let vs stand fast in the word of the Word, & not be carried away, and bowed quite downe with the raging streame of the multitude, but let vs know it to be one speciall engine of Satan, whereby he driueth vs from repentance.

The fourth let vnto repentance is long continuance of sinne, so that taketh away all sense & feeling of sinne, and maketh it as it were another Nature vnto vs, so that we may as well alter nature, as shake it off, when it is once thus coulered vnto vs through long custome. Wherefore it is said, Ier. 13. 23. Can the black Moore change his skinne, or the Leopard his spots? Then may you also doe good that are accustomed to do euill. Where the Prophet affirmeth that it is as hard to cure an old disease that is bred in the bones, and to remedy a sinne that hath bene hatched and brought up with vs, as

to wash a Black. Spore white, or to change the spots of a Leopard, which cannot be without destroying of nature. And surely, if it were will he shall finde as hard a matter to loose an old custome together it be of swearing, of gaming, of lying, of whooring, of euill company, or any other sinne, as to wash an *Aethiopian*. Therefore it is written *Prouerb. 27.* Though thou shouldst bray a foole in a mortar, among Wheate brayed with a Pestell, yet will not his foolishnesse depart from him. So that as long as we are in custome with sinne, the doore of repentance is barren against vs.

The fift hinderance is, long escaping of punishment, for the wicked thereby are hardened in sinns, and driuen off from repentance: euen as an old thorne that hath stollen a long time, and escaped both prison and gallows, is animated more boldly to proceed in his wickednes, thinking he shall so alwayes escape: So many filthy and loose liuers goe forward in their abomination without repentance, thinking that because God doth not incontinently punish them, and shew some manifold iudgement and signe of his wrath vpon them, therefore they shall be acquitted for altogether. Whereas contrariwise, if God should by and by strike them downe as soone as they had sinned, by thundering vpon one, and lightening vpon another,

and

and raining fire and brimstone vpon the third, it would make them afraid. Whereupon it is said in 2 Pet. 3. 2, 4. This first vnderstanding, that there shall come in the last daies, mockers, which will walke after their lusts, and say: where is the promise of his comming? For since the Fathers dyed, all things continue alike from the beginning of the Creation. But let these men well know, that when God hath delayed a long time, and prolonged the terme of the wicked, at length he will shew, that although he waited for their repentance, yet hee forgot not their misdoings, but registred them before him, and packed them vp vpon a great heape to increase the terror of his wrath.

The first hinderance is, the beholding of other mens ends. For when some men that haue liued a wicked and an vngracious life, & haue bene notorious sinners, euen to the World, watch, so that enery man could point at them: yet if vpon their death bed they can say a few good wordes, and cry God mercy, and say their prayers, and forgive all the world, and so dye quietly, it is marvellous to heare how foolish people of the world will extoll them, and iustifie them saying: He made a very good end as any man could make, he died as quiet as a Lambe, and set all things in good order before he dyed. Whereupon another wicked and monstrous
barlet

Barlot is encouraged to sinne: for thinketh he, such a man liueth as longely as I, or any man else, and yet be made a very good end, and why may not I do so too? But alas these manerlyes are bleared; for to die quietly is not to die godly: to cry God mercy for fashion, is not to haue God mercifull: to say a few prayers from the teeth outward, is not to dye in the faith of Christ: for many do all these, and yet are miserably.

The last let is, hope of long life: for while men fade and besot themselves in this hope, they are drunken in sinne, and deferre the day of repentance, as the rich man in the 12 of Luk. dreaming of his long life, cast off all thought of God, and the other life, and of Christs coming, and of all good things, and said within himselfe: Soule, thou hast much goods laid vp for many yeeres, liue at ease, eate, drinke, and take thy pastime. Thus the bleare-eyed men of this world, choake by repentance, and quite smother it, by doating themselves with hope of long life. Therefore my deere brethren, I beseech you by the mercie of God, in the bowels of Christ Iesus, that none of all these common lets may stay you from speedy and vnfained repentance, but that you may ouersie them all: Lest haply you being found without repentance, and taken away in your sins, should

all perishe, and be damned, according to Christs
sentence. Therefore in conclusion let be with
godly Ezechiah be afraid of Gods threatnings,
fear him aforehand, stand in awe of God, exa-
mine our consciences, mourne for our sins, and
lament inwardly, that when the wicked who
have swimmied in pleasure here below, shall
enter into their eternall paines, we may then
say, there beate eternall peace and rest: that
when Iesus Christ shall appeare from heauen
with all his Angels, we may be sharers of
glory, and reigne with our God and our Sa-
viour Iesus Christ, and all his Saints and Angels
in the midst of all ioy, in the heauens for euer-
more. To the which ioy be being vs all, which
hath so dearly bought vs, Iesus Christ the righte-
ous. To whom with the Father, and the holy
Ghost be all honour, Glory, Praise, Power, and
Dominion, now and for euermore, Amen.

FINIS.



